

106TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 326

Expressing the sense of the Congress regarding the Federal Government's responsibility for starting a destructive fire near Los Alamos, New Mexico.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 15, 2000

Mrs. WILSON (for herself and Mr. UDALL of New Mexico) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Resources

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Congress regarding the Federal Government's responsibility for starting a destructive fire near Los Alamos, New Mexico.

Whereas on May 4, 2000, the National Park Service initiated a prescription burn on Federal land during the southwest's peak fire season;

Whereas on May 5, 2000, the prescription burn exceeded the containment capabilities of the National Park Service, was reclassified as a wildland burn, and spread to non-Federal land, quickly becoming characterized as a firestorm;

Whereas by May 7, 2000, the fire had grown in size and caused evacuations in and around Los Alamos, New Mexico, including the Los Alamos National Laboratory, one

of America’s leading national research laboratories and birthplace of the atomic bomb;

Whereas on May 12, 2000, the President issued a major disaster declaration for the Counties of Bernalillo, Cibola, Los Alamos, McKinley, Mora, Rio Arriba, Sandoval, San Juan, San Miguel, Santa Fe, Taos, and Torrance;

Whereas the fire resulted in the loss of Federal, State, local, tribal, and private property;

Whereas the loss to private citizens of personal property and memories cannot be accounted for in monetary terms nor repaid with financial assistance; and

Whereas a full congressional investigation will assist the Federal Government to determine the cause of this disaster and its full cost to the Federal Government and the people of New Mexico: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring), That—*

3 (1) it is the sense of the Congress that the Fed-
4 eral Government should—

5 (A) take responsibility for the fire inten-
6 tionally set by the National Park Service at the
7 Bandelier National Monument, New Mexico, on
8 May 4, 2000, which burned out of control near
9 Los Alamos, New Mexico;

10 (B) take all necessary steps to mitigate the
11 threats from the fire to the public health and
12 well-being of the residents of New Mexico; and

1 (C) take all necessary steps to compensate
2 the people of New Mexico for the losses in-
3 curred as a result of National Park Service ac-
4 tions; and

5 (2) the Congress commends—

6 (A) the people of New Mexico for opening
7 their homes and their hearts to the New Mexi-
8 can communities affected by this fire;

9 (B) the New Mexico firefighting teams for
10 their efforts and courage in battling the fire;

11 (C) the New Mexico National Guard and
12 the State of New Mexico for their efforts in
13 mitigating the fire and assisting those affected
14 by it;

15 (D) the American Red Cross and numer-
16 ous other charitable organizations and volun-
17 teers for the extensive assistance provided to
18 the fire victims;

19 (E) the Western States that have assisted
20 New Mexico by sending people and equipment
21 to help fight the fire;

22 (F) the businesses which have served as
23 food and clothing collection points;

1 (G) all organizations and individuals that
2 have collected and disseminated information to
3 those affected by the fire;

4 (H) Sandia National Laboratories for ex-
5 tending assistance to fire victims;

6 (I) the Department of Energy for pro-
7 viding analysis and monitoring public health
8 concerns; and

9 (J) the people of the United States for
10 opening their hearts to assist with the plight of
11 New Mexicans affected by the fire and for send-
12 ing additional firefighting teams to help battle
13 the fire.

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